

## 10/01/17      **Effective Apologetics**

“The key to the Columbo tactic is to go on the offensive in an inoffensive way by using carefully selected questions to productively advance the conversation. Simply put, never make a statement, at least at first, when a question will do the job.”

– Christian apologist Greg Koukl, *Tactics*

“Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

... They brought him a coin. And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?”

– Mt. 22:17-20

### **Key points:**

- Even with great information, we need to take the right approach so people will listen and think.
- Questions are often more effective than statements.
- The 5 best questions to ask:
  - What do you believe about \_\_\_\_? (Does what)
  - Why do you think that’s true?
  - How did you come to believe that?
  - What do you mean by \_\_\_\_? (Use any time to clarify)
  - What would you say to someone who said \_\_\_\_?
- Other tips for great conversations:
  - Agree whenever possible.
  - Remember your goal – to seek the truth and get your friend to think about it
  - State your goal to your friend – finding the truth
  - Use “we” and “us” when you can, even if you disagree.
  - Actually listen. Remember that the person you’re speaking with is also someone that God loves immensely and that Christ died to save.

### **Resources:**

“The Apologist’s Most Important Tool,” Trent Horn, Catholic Answers Magazine online, July 10, 2013.

“100 Questions that Jesus asked and YOU must answer,” Msgr. Charles Pope, February 10, 2012.

See blog at [beginningapologetics.wordpress.com](http://beginningapologetics.wordpress.com) for the links and more!